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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/761,743	01/21/2004	Kenichi Niiyama	12844.0065US01	3625

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EXAMINER	
BENENSON, BORIS	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
2836	

DATE MAILED: 06/23/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/761,743	NIIYAMA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Boris Benenson	2836	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *21 January 2004*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-5* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-5* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *21 January 2004* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *1/21/2004*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

Detailed Actions

Information Disclosure Statement

1. Reference 11-41801 could not be fully considered, because no translation has been provided. Only drawings have been considered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Morikawa et al. (5.091.818). Morikawa et al. disclose an Overvoltage Protection Circuit including an integrated circuit (Fig.1, Pos. 31 or Fig.3, Pos. 15) with incorporated overvoltage protection. "For example, in a semiconductor integrated circuit used on a vehicle and receiving a power supply voltage from a vehicle battery, an overvoltage protecting circuit is incorporated for protecting an internal circuit upon an increase in battery voltage above a predetermined value by a surge or the like"(Col.1, Lines 13-18).

The semiconductor integrated circuit comprises a voltage input terminal (Fig.1, Pos.33 or Fig.3, Pos.13), a voltage limiting means (Fig.1, pos.32 or Fig.3, Pos. 16) that limits applied voltage to a predetermined value, and an internal circuit read on circuit block (15) to which voltage, limited by the voltage limiting means is applied. An external power from a DC power source (Fig.1, Pos. 35 or Fig.3, Pos.11) is applied through a wiring (Fig.1, Pos.34 or Fig.3, Pos.12) to an external terminal of an external resistor (RD), connected between the voltage input terminal of the integrated circuit and the external terminal. A combination of a voltage drop on the resistor and on voltage limiting means is functioning as limiting voltage to have the predetermine value when voltage applied to the external terminal becomes an overvoltage.

Referring to Claim 3, Morikawa et al. disclose a voltage limiting means (Fig.1, Pos. 32) comprising a bipolar transistor (Pos. Q) connected between the voltage input terminal (33) and a ground (36) and at least one diode (Dz) connected in series between a base of the bipolar transistor and an input voltage point of the voltage limiting means.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claim 2 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morikawa et al. (5.091.818). Morikawa et al. disclose a circuit including all the limitation of Claim 1, as it was discussed above, but didn't disclose a structure of the internal circuit (Fig.1, Pos. 31 and Fig.3, Pos. 15). Morikawa et al. disclose that internal circuit comprises an integrated circuit, which inherently have a voltage input terminal. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Morikawa et al. and include into the internal circuit as many integrated circuits as necessary, since it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *St. Regis Paper Co. V. Bemis Co., 193 USPQ 8.*

4. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morikawa et al. (5.091.818) in view of Kawamoto (6,762,461). Morikawa et al. disclose a circuit including all the limitation of Claim 1, as it was discussed above, but didn't disclose a Zener diode connected between the input voltage and a ground. Kawamoto teaches Semiconductor Element Protected With Plurality Of Zener Diodes. Figure 11, described as conventional protective circuit, indicates a Zener diode (Fig.11, Pos.D1) connected between input voltage terminal and the ground. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Morikawa et al. with teachings of Kawamoto and use a Zener diode connected between input voltage terminal and the ground as the voltage limiting means, because it will direct excessive voltage to the ground and therefore protect connected circuitry from overvoltage and because as teaches Kawamoto it is conventional.

5. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morikawa et al. (5.091.818) in view of Chen U.S. Patent Application (10/272,061). Morikawa et al. disclose a circuit including all the limitation of Claim 1, as it was discussed above, but didn't disclose the voltage limiting means comprising a MOS transistor connected between voltage input

terminal and the ground, a first resistor connected between the gate of the MOS and input voltage, and a second resistor connected between the gate of the MOS and the ground. Chen teaches a High ESD Stress Sustaining ESD Protection Circuit, wherein a voltage on the gate of MOS is determined by voltage dividing ratio of a first resistor and a second resistor. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Morikawa et al. with teachings of Chen and use in a voltage limiting means a MOS transistor with a voltage divider connected to the gate of the MOS, because it will enable easily and reliably control a triggering point of the MOS and therefore provide stable supply of safe voltage to an integrated circuit.

Contact information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Boris Benenson whose telephone number is (571) 272-2048. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:20-6:00) First Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Sircus can be reached on (571) 272-2800 ext 36. The fax phone number for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Boris Benenson
Examiner
Art Unit 2836

B.B.

Stephen W. Jackson
6-20-06

STEPHEN W. JACKSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER